

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8611

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

DIA WASHDC

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0287

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MORG EC

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT

REF: QUITO 0266

1. SUMMARY: ALL IS QUIET IN ECUADOR FOLLOWING THE JAN. 11 CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT AND NORMAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES APPEAR TO BE TAKING PLACE. THE TRIUMVIRATE SEEMS TO BE IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ARMED FORCES. FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION GENERAL GUSTAVO VASCONEZ' WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN BUT HE IS NOT IN RIOBAMBA WITH THE GALAPAGOS BRIGADE ARMORED UNIT AS WIDELY RUMORED. MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS GENERAL RAUL PUMA REMAINS JAILED. VICE ADMIRAL ALFREDO POVEDA BURBANO, PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT, IS ASSUMING THE ROLE AS THE RULING GROUP'S SPOKESMAN. THERE CONTINUES TO BE CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION ABOUT THE NEW CABINET BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS. RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS THAT HAD BEEN OFF THE AIR HAVE RESUMED NORMAL OPERATION. END SUMMARY.

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2. ECUADOREANS SEEM TO HAVE ACCEPTED THE NEWS OF THEIR

NEW GOVERNMENT QUIETLY, WITHOUT SHOCK OR ENTHUSIASM, AND PROCEED TO GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. THERE APPEARS TO BE PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE TO THE CHANGE, WHICH CAME AS NO GREAT SURPRISE TO ANYONE. BUSINESS ACTIVITIES MONDAY, JAN. 12 SEEMED TO DEVELOP NORMALLY WITH BOTH PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT OFFICE OPEN AND CARRYING OUT THEIR USUAL ACTIVITIES. ONE NOTICES NO UNUSUAL NUMBER OF POLICE IN THE STREETS OR AROUND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

3. FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION, GENERAL GUSTAVO VASCONEZ, WHO HAD PUBLICLY DECLARED HIS OPPOSITION TO THE INCLUSION OF GENERAL GUILLERMO DURAN IN THE GOVERNING TRIUMVIRATE JAN. 9, HAS DISAPPEARED FROM PUBLIC VIEW AND HAS LIKELY GONE INTO HIDING TO AVOID ARREST. REPORTS CIRCULATING THE MORNING OF JAN. 11 THAT HE HAD LEFT TO JOIN THE GALAPAGOS ARMORED BRIGADE AT RIOBAMBA AND TO SERVE AS A FOCAL POINT FOR OPPOSITION TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT SEEM TO BE UNFOUNDED, SINCE HE HAS NOT SURFACED AT RIOBAMBA AND REPORTS FROM THAT CITY INDICATE CALM AND NORMALITY.

4. MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS GENERAL RAUL PUMA, WHO WAS ARRESTED JAN. 9 REMAINS IN CUSTODY. HE MANAGED TO HAVE BROADCAST DURING THE MORNING OF JAN. 11 A STRONG CRITICISM OF SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBER GENERAL DURAN.

5. PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT, VICE ADMIRAL ALFREDO POVEDA, HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT ALL OF THE ARMED FORCES ARE COMPLETELY UNITED BEHIND THE NEW GOVERNMENT. POVEDA, ASIDE FROM CARRYING THE TITLE OF PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT, HAS BECOME ACTING SPOKESMAN FOR THE GROUP. TO WHAT EXTENT THIS LEADERSHIP IS RECOGNIZED WITHIN THE TRIUMVIRATE IS NOT YET KNOWN.

6. THERE CONTINUES TO BE SPECULATION CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION AND NATURE OF A NEW GOE CABINET. THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS AS YET, BUT NEWS ACCOUNTS INDICATE THAT THE NEW CABINET WILL BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY. EL COMERCIO OF JAN. 12 REPORTS THAT ITS MAKEUP WILL BE LARGELY MILITARY.

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7. ALL LOCAL RADIO STATIONS AND TELEVISION STATIONS ARE NOW OPERATING NORMALLY. RADIO QUITO (OWNED BY EL COMERCIO) AND RADIO COLON BOTH WENT OFF THE AIR THE EVENING OF JAN. 9 BUT RESUMED BROADCASTING THE MORNING OF JAN. 10. RADIO QUITO CLOSED ITS OPERATION FOR A HALF HOUR BY GOVERNMENT ORDER THE MORNING OF JAN. 11 FOLLOWING ITS BROADCAST OF GENERAL PUMA'S CRITICISM OF GENERAL DURAN. UPON RESUMING

SERVICE, IT BROADCAST INNOCUOUS SOCCER COVERAGE. TELE-
VISION'S CHANNEL 4 OPERATED BY EL TIEMPO'S OWNER GRANDA
CENTENO WHICH WAS CLOSED DOWN THE EVENING OF JAN. 2 FOR
HAVING BROADCAST A YEAR-END NEWS SUMMARY INCLUDING COVER-
AGE OF THE SEPT. 1 COUP ATTEMPT, RESUMED NORMAL OPERATIONS
THE EVENING OF JAN. 10.
HEMENWAY

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